
UNIT 1 BEING AND RELATION

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1.0. OBJECTIVES

Being is that which is some way or 'something.' There is no being which is not 'something.' Something or Being underlies, penetrates, transforms, and unifies all beings. Being is the Being of beings. Being, as the ultimate foundation of all beings, is related to all beings. "To be is to be related." Being is related to beings both ontologically and epistemologically. Hence, this Unit explains both:

- Ontology of relation
 - Epistemology of relation
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1.1. INTRODUCTION

Relation comes from the Latin word, *referre* which means bring back, the reference of one thing to another, mutual inter-directedness. It is defined as the bearing (reference, respect, attitude, ordination) of one thing to something else. 'To be is to be related'. Being is the Being of beings. As Being is the Being of beings, it is always related to beings and all beings are also simultaneously and radically related to Being (hence relative to Being), which is always the object and subject of knowledge. We cannot think and speak of Being without any knowledge of it. Both ontology and epistemology are inseparably related. They are the two aspects of 'the same coin,' which is metaphysics. Metaphysics is metaphysics of Being and knowledge. Hence, metaphysics of relation presupposes both ontology of relation and epistemology of relation.

1.2. ONTOLOGY OF RELATION

Factors of Relation: Every relation contains three factors: subject, term, and foundation. Subject is the radical principle of the relation. It is that which is related to another, e.g., I know him. Term is that to which the subject of the relation is referred or related, e.g., I know him. Foundation is the proximate principle from which the relation springs. It is the origin or ground of the relation, e.g., I know him. It is the basis, the ground, the reason why the subject is related to the term. It is the bond which unites the subject and term together, and places them 'in relation' to each other. Foundation is further distinguished into two: Immediate and Mediate. Immediate foundation is the foundation which is intrinsic to the subject of the relation, e.g., I know him. Knowledge is intrinsic. Mediate foundation is the foundation which is extrinsic to the subject of the relation, e.g., I have a pen. Possession of the pen which is the foundation of the relation is extrinsic to the subject.

From this it is plain that one thing alone can never form a relation. Relation must exist between two or more things taken in reference to each other. The essence of 'relation,' consists in the 'esse ad', the 'Being-toward' of one thing to another. It is the bearing, the reference, the attitude,

the ordination of one to another due to some foundation which is the necessary condition for a relation, but not the 'relation' itself. The foundation is present in both the subject and the term. Two white horses, for example, are similar to each other in their white colour. Their whiteness is not the relation of their similarity, but only the reason or foundation of their relation by which they stand to each other in a relation of similarity. The 'relation', therefore, results from the presence of a common foundation in a subject and term and is considered to be distinct from the foundation, the subject, and the term.

Every category contains foundation. Substance contains the foundation for specific identity and diversity. Two flasks of water, two sparrows, two humans, etc. (the two members of each pair being compared together), are identical in species. Each pair, compared with another pair in this series, is different in species. Here is the relation of specific identity among all the individuals of a certain species, and the relation of specific diversity among the individuals of different species. Quantity contains the foundation for the relation of equality and inequality. Things that have the same weight, size, volume, shape, or dimensions are equal, while things which differ from each other in these respects are unequal. Two globes of the same diameter have the relation of equality. Quality contains the foundation of similarity and dissimilarity. For example, we speak of two painters as being similar or dissimilar in their technique, of two philosophers as being similar or dissimilar in their opinions, or of two cats as being similar or dissimilar in their behaviour. Action and passion (reaction) contain the foundation of the relation of cause and effect as observed in mechanical, physical, and chemical agencies. Salt, the effect of the combination of sodium and chlorine, is in relation to these two chemicals. Electricity, which produces light and heat, is related to them as effects to their cause. Time contains the foundation for priority, simultaneity, and posteriority in successive duration. Place contains the foundation of the relation of distance, nearness, and relative positions. The moon is nearer to the earth than to the sun. Therefore, there is the relation of comparative nearness between the moon and the earth. The positions of north and south, east and west, or right and left, or before and behind, or up and down, or inside and outside, etc., give rise to relations among objects. Posture and habitus contains the foundation of the relation of similarity and dissimilarity between things, but in a different manner than the qualities. To be prone, or to be erect, makes objects either similar or dissimilar. Thus, there is a relation of dissimilarity between one human lying down and another standing. So too, to be clothed or not clothed makes two persons either similar or dissimilar. From this it is seen that every category contains items which may be the foundation for various sorts of relations between things.

Kinds of Relation: Relation can be grouped into two main classes: logical and real. Logical relation is the relation which exists only in the mind. It is a relation made solely by the mind and placed by the mind between entities. These entities may exist outside the mind or in the mind itself as concepts, judgements, and inferences. The foundation for such a relation is an *ens rationis*, a logical entity without any real foundation in the extra-mental things themselves. The relation is strictly a product of the mind's thinking. For instance, we systematise our ideas when we study a certain branch of knowledge, and in this manner bring them into relation with one another. There exists logical relation of comprehension and extension between every subject and predicate in a sentence, between the premises and conclusion of an inference, and between a number of inferences in an extended argumentation; such relations are logical as they exist solely in the mind and its operations. Similarly, there are also relations between objects outside the mind,

although these relations have no reason or foundation in the properties of the things themselves. For instance, a sceptre represents royal dignity; a palm, victory; a red light, danger; a flag, a country; but the relation between these things is purely of the mind's own making and has no foundation in the things themselves.

Real relation is a relation which exists between things, independent of the mind and its thinking. The subject and the term are real entities in nature, while the foundation of the relation is present in them objectively and not merely conceived by the mind as being there. There is thus a connection or bond between real things, due to something present in them, independent of all thought. Such a relation exists, for instance, between parent and offspring, between plant and flower, between two pups of the same litter, between two trees of equal height, between two houses of the same architectural style etc. A real relation may be either essential (transcendental) or accidental (categorical or predicamental). An essential (or transcendental) relation is one in which the very essence of one thing has a relation to something. This relation will always be present as soon as and as long as this essence is present. The essence cannot exist without this relation. Thus the relation between every being and an intellect, making this being 'true' and 'good,' is essential or transcendental; for it is an essential or transcendental attribute of all being to be true and good. Every creature owes its entire essence and existence to the creator, and thus the relation of the creature to the creator is an essential one. In the same way, the relation between body and soul in human is an essential relation since both are ordained toward each other to form a composite substance. Real Relation can also be subsistent or accidental. Subsistent relation is a relation which is identical with its subject and immediate foundation, e.g., the reality of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit in the Trinity. Accidental Relation is a relation which is really distinct from both its subject and immediate foundation. An accidental (categorical or predicamental) relation is based upon an accident as its foundation. The accident is something superadded to the essence and its absence would not destroy the essence itself. For instance, two children have blond and curly hair; in this instance they stand to each other in the relation of similarity. Two men are six feet tall; they are related to each other through the equality of the quantitative measurements. Obviously, 'blond and curly hair' and the equal 'height of six feet' are accidental modifications of these persons without belonging to their essence.

The subject of a real relation is always a substance. For, a real relation is something that accrues to some absolute nature; it is, therefore, an accident. Since the relation is something real, it is a real accident. But only a substance can be the subject of a real accident. As an accident, therefore, a real relation inheres in its subject. Accordingly, it is an inherent accident, though not an absolutely inherent one like quantity or quality. It depends also on something outside its subject, i.e., on its term. The term of a real relation is something really existent. If the term perishes, the relation thereby perishes. Relation is essentially dependent on its term. In this way the real relation is not absolutely inherent in the subject. It can go out of existence without any change (substantial or accidental) in the absolute reality of the subject. It inheres therefore not absolutely but in dependence upon its term. It can come into being without any change in the absolute reality of its subject, as when a man becomes an uncle through the birth of a nephew about which the child knows nothing. The one subject really ceases to be equal; the other really becomes an uncle. In this case there is difference in relative reality, but not in the absolute reality of the subjects. For, the subjects change relatively, independent of human intellectual activity. Hence, it is the term that specifies a relation. It is, of course, remotely determined by the kind of

subject in which it inheres, and by the foundation or ground upon which it rests. But the ultimate specification comes from the term. For instance, a father is ultimately denominated from a child, a grandfather from a grandchild. In every case the term gives the final specification. Since subject and term are at opposite ends of the relation, they may both be called its terms (*extrema*). The subject is the term (*a quo*) from which the relation proceeds, and the term is that to which (*ad quem*) the relation is directed. If either is lacking, the relation cannot exist. Every relation, in this way, is in some sense reciprocal. But the nature of the relations need not be the same. In one term it may be a real relation, but in the other a relation of reason. For instance, in creation the relation of creature to creator is real, while that of creator to creature is only a relation of reason. Similarly, the relation of knower to thing known is real, but that of the thing known to the knower is a relation of reason. The foundation or ground of relation always remains while the relation may perish. For instance, the ground would really remain in the sugar cube if every other sugar cube in the world had perished. The sugar cube, however, would no longer be similar in reality to any other. The real relation of similarity would have perished, while the ground would still really endure. The absolute reality of the ground and the relative reality of the relation, accordingly, cannot really coincide.

From another standpoint relations are mutual and non-mutual. A relation is non-mutual, if its foundation is real or logical in one of the extremes only. For example, the relation of knowledge between the knowing subject and the known object in which the foundation of the relation is the real transition from a state of non-knowledge to a state of knowledge with regard to some definite object. It is obvious, however, that only one extreme undergoes this transition and change, namely, the knowing subject which acquires the knowledge. The relation of knowledge is real only on the part of knower; on the part of the known it is only logical. A relation is mutual, if its foundation is real or logical in both extremes. If two horses are white, the foundation of the relation of their similarity, namely, 'white colour' is present in both horses. When two poles have a length of ten feet, the foundation of their equality in length, namely, their quantity, is found in each pole, because each one is ten feet long independent of the other. The relation, therefore, is mutual. A mutual relation is one of the same denominations or symmetrical, when the foundation in both extremes is the foundation of the same nature and degree. The whiteness of the horses, the common origin or children in the same family, the equal length of the poles, are of the same denomination, because the foundation is of the same nature and degree in each. A mutual relation is of mixed denomination or asymmetrical, when the foundation present in both extremes is of a different nature or degree. This means a difference of foundation in both, and consequently also a difference in relation of the one to the other. Many relations are of this kind; for example, that between parents and children, husband and wife, master and servant, physician and patient, lawyer and client, judge and criminal, teacher and pupil, superior and subject, king and people, and so on. These examples for mutual relations pertain to all relations which are mutually present in both extremes, whether of the same or of a mixed denomination. They may also be purely logical, having a foundation which is conceptual or logical in both extremes. Thus, all relations existing between concepts, judgements, and inferences rest upon foundations which have no existence except in the mental order, since they are logical entities and as such have no existence outside the mind. Such is the relation between subject and predicate in a sentence, all relations of grammatical construction, etc. Formal logic is practically a treatise on mutual logical relations.

Relative and Correlative: Correlatives are simultaneous in nature. By this we mean that relative things, precisely and formally as in relation to each other, must exist at the same time. Thus, 'mother' and 'child' are correlatives. Obviously, the mother as a 'woman' or 'human being' exists before her child. But as a 'mother' she must have a 'child' and she cannot be a 'mother' before she has a 'child'. Correlatives are simultaneous in knowledge. This means that the knowledge of one extreme as 'relative' always involves the knowledge of the other extreme as 'correlative'. And in truth, it is impossible to know what 'parent' is without also knowing what 'offspring' is. If we know that St. Peter's Basilica in Rome is more beautiful than Bom Jesu Basilica in Goa, we must have knowledge of the beauty of each. Correlatives connote each other. This means that as the intelligibility of the one extreme is dependent on the intelligibility of the other, they can be understood only in reference to each other. This follows from the foregoing principle that the concept of 'offspring' involves the concept of 'parent', and vice versa. That two figures are similar to each other in their triangularity, implies that the understanding of the 'triangular shape' of the one involves the understanding of the 'triangular shape' of the other. Hence, no relative term, as 'relative', can be understood without bringing the correlative term into the understanding, since they cannot be understood except in reference to each other.

Absolute and Relative: It has become almost commonplace in recent philosophy to say that all things are only 'relative.' The reason lies in the fact that anything, in order to be known, must enter into a relation with the mind and as such must be 'relative to mind.' It is true that nothing can be known unless it enters into a relation with the mind, because 'knowledge' in its very concept and essence implies such a relation. But this only means that a thing, when known, has a relation to the mind and that the knowledge of the thing is dependent on this relation. It does not, however, mean that the thing is dependent on the mind and its knowledge-relation, so that the reality of the thing would be dependent on our knowing it. A thing must be real or 'absolute' before it can become known, before it can become 'relative' to our mind.

All creatural beings are 'relative'; for they are essentially and necessarily dependent on God, the First Cause, for their being, and this 'dependence' is a form of relation. In this sense, only God is 'absolute', because God alone is without dependence on any other being. Creatural beings are also related in many ways among themselves as similar or dissimilar, equal or unequal, acting or acted upon, specifically identical or diverse. A thing is said to be relative, when it is taken in reference to something else; it is absolute, when it is taken in itself and on its own account. A relation always implies the three factors: subject, term, and foundation; and the relation is conceived as something 'existing between' the subject and the term due to their common foundation. The 'subject' and 'term' must be distinct in entity. No being is said to be related to its own self; it is always in reference to something else.' Consequently, both the subject and the term must be 'something in itself and on its own' before each can have a reference to the other. For, if they had no being or existence of their own, they could never have a reference to anything account,' and that means to be absolute. Things, therefore, cannot be 'relative' unless they are first 'absolute.' It follows that creatural beings in the universe are both absolute and relative. But is this not a contradiction in terms? Certainly, if it were stated that something was 'absolute' and also 'relative' from the same standpoint and in the same respect, a contradiction would be involved in the statement. A thing, however, can very well be 'relative' from one standpoint and 'absolute' from another, and then there is no contradiction. Considered in themselves all things

have a reality of their own, independent. But to have a being and existence of its own means to be 'something in itself and on its own of the being and existence of other things, and hence, from this standpoint, they are absolute. Compared, however, with other things, they are either similar or dissimilar, equal or unequal, etc., and viewed from this standpoint, they are relative. As a matter of fact, they can be 'relative' to others only because they are 'absolute' in themselves. Hence, the knowledge of things as 'relative' presupposes the knowledge of them as 'absolute': we must always know the terms of a relation before we know the relation itself. Consequently, the knowledge of the absolute is prior to the knowledge of the relative.

We may summarize the doctrine of relation in the following sentences: Not all relations are logical in character; some relations are real in nature; the entity of the 'relation' is really identical with the entity of the 'foundation' in the extremes, with a virtual distinction between them; a knowledge of the 'absolute' is necessary before knowledge of the 'relative' is possible.

1.3. EPISTEMOLOGY OF RELATION

Many of the Indian philosophers understand and interpret relation as both ontological and epistemological, without making any clear demarcation between them. For them, relation is essentially non-monistic in its connotation and therefore it necessarily presupposes a dualistic or pluralistic conceptual framework. All relations imply two or more distinct factors: *anuyogi* (adjunct) and *pratiyogi* (subjunct). Relation is mainly of five kinds: *samyoga* (conjunction), *vibhaga* (disjunction), *prthaktva* (separateness), *samkhya* (number), and *samavaya* (inherence). *Samyoga* is a relation between two independently existing things that they can be in and out of relation without their essential nature being affected. It is a separable, terminable, and repeatable relation. *Vibhaga* inheres in pairs of individuals which have just parted from contact with each other. *Prthaktva* is a quality which resides in pairs of separate substances. *Samkhya* refers to numbers higher than one. *Samavaya* is a relation between two or more inseparably existing objects. It is a relation of 'being-in' or 'inhering in' like the cloth inhering in the threads, or colour in the threads. In the Buddhist tradition all relations are regarded as mental construction without objective existence. Relations are only hypostatized as external and superimposed upon the reals which are impermanent or momentary particulars. They are discrete, unrelated, and superimpositions (*upadhi*). Relation is an interpretation of reality rather than reality itself.

Most of the Western philosophical traditions make a clear distinction between subject and object in the act of knowledge. They would interpret knowledge as a relation between two beings: the known and the knower. Through this relation the knowing subject (knower) opens oneself to the world. One who knows leaves oneself and turns to the surrounding world. However, in knowledge one returns to oneself as the known being 'penetrates' into the subject in some way, since knowledge takes place not outside but inside the subject. This knowledge is the result of a natural process.

Process of Human Knowledge: Human knowledge is the result of the following process. The physical stimuli proceeding from the things activate external senses, arousing a nerve impulse which travels along the nerve fibres to respective centres of the cortex as sensation of colour, sound, flavour, odour, pain, warmth, etc. In this way the sensing subject is determined in its sensory response, partly by its own vital nature and partly by the character of the incoming stimuli. Sensation is thus to be the product of a double factor: one is objective—the physical stimuli issuing from the external thing; and the other subjective—the vital response of the subject, the particular

stimuli with the particular kinds of sensations. The result is the cognitional image of the object (phantasm or sense-image). The **phantasm** is the total sensory impression of the completed cognitional image of the thing furnishing the stimuli which arouse the sensations. The phantasm is the unitive bond between the sensory subject and the thing, making the thing known in a sensory manner. Universals are derived from sense image through abstraction. Sense image represents both the similarities and the differences of the individual things. **Intellect:** The human intellect has two aspects: agent intellect and passive intellect. The active or agent intellect operates on phantasm, and draws out the essence of the individual thing applicable to all the members of the same class. Then the passive intellect (potential intellect) receives the abstracted essence (impressed intelligible species) and makes an intellectual representation of the things (expressed intelligible species), namely, universal idea. Direct universal idea considers only the essence and not the applicability of all the members of the same class. Whereas reflex universal compares the idea (expressed intelligible species) with the individual of the same class, affirming or denying; that is judgement. The universality is the product of mind having its foundation in things themselves. Knowledge, in this sense, is the presence of the known in the knower, the presence of the object to the subject.

Knowledge as the Presence of the Object to the Subject: In knowledge, an object makes itself present to the subject. The known 'reproduces' itself in the knower; e.g., when the colour blue is known, the blue of the thing penetrates into the subject. This process takes place immaterially. The real thing remains unchanged. The mystery of knowledge is that the object, in so far as it is known, does not act as a body on the subject. "The object exists in the subject in a new way, which is not a material mode of being, but an immaterial one (this does not necessarily mean spiritual), and intentional, in so far as such an objective presence always refers to the material thing." For we cannot observe the intentional presence of colour in a subject, as the blue colour in a flame is observed. The intentional presence is an unobservable and absolutely private fact.

Knowledge as Possession of the Known by the Knower: Knowledge is a possession of the known on the part of the knower. There is a certain union of the object with the subject. This union, however, does not cancel the difference between the knower and the known. There would be no knowledge without this union. The known is not transformed into another thing; the knower grasps the known as it is. The conformity between the known as it is present in the knower and the real known, is truth. What changes is the mode of being of the known being. There is a material mode of being in the thing insofar as it exists outside the subject, and an immaterial mode insofar as it exists intentionally in the subject. The real object is one but its intentional presence multiplies itself according to the number of knowing subjects.

Knowledge as Intentional Assimilation: In the act of knowing, the knower is the known since the knower assimilates the known (assimilation = make something similar) and appropriates it (the knower appropriates the known). Such an appropriation is the deepest root of knowledge. It satisfies the requirements of absolute idealism. However, absolute idealism exaggerates the identity of the subject and the object, which results in a cognitive monism without any distinction between beings. Cognitive assimilation takes place in the immaterial sphere and thus maintains intact the distinction between the knower and the known. There is no real transformation of the object. On the contrary, the knowing subject is transformed by the object which 'acts' on the subject.

Knowledge as the Actualization of the Intentional Species: The species is an act of the faculty of knowledge. It is an ontological situation of the cognitive soul through which the soul is enriched by an intrinsic principle which has the function of producing the knowledge in act (i.e., the operation of knowledge). The species is not that which is known (for in such a case, knowledge would always be self-knowledge) but that by which the real thing is known. The species through which knowledge is made possible, is not innate, since they proceed from things through a psychic activity. Only angels know by infused species (this is what rationalism claims for man). Knowledge has need of the species since the finite and created intelligence is not the measure of things. God knows the created beings in his supreme essence which is identical with his existence without any species. However, not everything is known by man through the species, but only the object of immediate knowledge. God is known in an analogical way from the ideas of the directly known things, and not through species.

Knowledge as the Appropriation of the Being of a Thing: A thing is known by that which is. To know means to possess a being intentionally. Knowledge is always relative to the mode of being. It does not mean that knowledge is extrinsic to Being. It is also a mode of being. Hence, knowledge is also knowable through reflection. Since knowledge refers to Being we can conclude that a thing is knowable insofar as it is, in the measure in which it is. The reason for the knowability of something is its content of being. That which is not, is not knowable. I can know only that which is.

Being as the Formal Object of Knowledge: The formal object of knowledge is Being, i.e., insofar as it is, insofar as it possesses Being as an act. If Being is the formal object of knowledge, then it is necessarily contained in the comprehension of every object. The first thing that falls under the scope of knowledge is Being since the comprehension of a being implies the comprehension of the character of Being. Our knowledge is always the knowledge of 'something,' of Being. The notion of Being is not innate but the result of experience in which human notices Being as soon as one knows intellectually. Anything that is the object of some comprehension is first grasped *sub ratione entis*, under the aspect of Being. The fact that the formal object of knowledge is Being does not mean that human has a perfect notion of everything. Cognitive progress is made through a growing reflection. Of course, explicit and systematic reflection on Being is the task of metaphysics just as the scientific knowledge of light is the task of optics, and not of the common human who, however, sees everything in virtue of light.

Check Your Progress

Note: use the space provided for your Answers

1) What do you understand by relation? What are the different kinds of relation?

2) Bring out clearly the complementarity of both ontology of relation and epistemology of relation.

1.4. LET US SUM UP

Being is the Being of beings. As Being is the Being of beings, all beings are also simultaneously and radically related to Being. We cannot think or speak of Being without any knowledge of it. Metaphysics is metaphysics of Being and knowledge. Hence, a metaphysics of relation presupposes both an ontology of relation and an epistemology of relation. Ontology of relation is based on three factors: subject, term and foundation. Subject is the radical principle of the relation. Term is that to which the subject of the relation is referred. Foundation is the proximate principle from which the relation originates. Relation can also be grouped into two main classes: logical and real. Logical relation is the relation which exists only in the mind. Real relation is a relation which exists among things. A real relation may be either essential or accidental. An essential relation is one in which the very essence of one thing has a relation to something. Real relation can also be subsistent or accidental. Subsistent relation is identical with its subject and immediate foundation, whereas accidental relation is really distinct from both its subject and immediate foundation. An accidental relation is based upon an accident as its foundation.

Many of the Indian philosophers understand and interpret relation as both ontological and epistemological, without making any clear demarcation between them. However, most of the Western philosophical traditions make a clear distinction between subject and object in the act of knowledge. They would interpret human knowledge as a relation between the two: the known and the knower. For them, human knowledge is the result of a process in which the physical stimuli proceeding from the things activate external senses producing sensations which form phantasm or sense-image. The active intellect operates on phantasm and draws out the essence of the individual thing applicable to all the members of the same class. Then the passive intellect (potential intellect) receives the abstracted essence (impressed intelligible species) and makes an intellectual representation of the things (expressed intelligible species), namely, a universal idea. When a universal idea is affirmed or denied of a particular, we have judgment, which is the basic unit of human knowledge. Knowledge, thus, is the presence of the known in the knower, a relation of Being and being known.

1.5. FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

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UNIT 2 BEING AND CAUSALITY

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2.0. OBJECTIVES

The Principle of causality states: 'whatever happens or becomes must have a cause for its happening or becoming'. The expression '*whatever happens*' means 'whatever begins to be or to exist'; '*becomes*' means 'whatever passes from potentiality to actuality'. Hence the principle can be reformulated as follows: *Whatever passes from a state of non-existence into a state of existence must have an efficient cause for its existence.* This Unit is designed to explain:

- The essential nature of cause
 - Main divisions of cause
 - Cause in its relation to effect
 - Cause in its relation to condition, occasion, sufficient reason, and chance
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2.1. INTRODUCTION

Action always implies a change and change implies causality. The agent is the 'cause' and the action of the agent producing the change is the 'causality.' The change produced in the patient as reaction is the 'effect'. Cause is that which produces an effect. In the traditional view, *cause is an ontological principle which exercises a positive influence in the production of something else.* There are three factors that enter into the concept 'production': that which produces, or the *cause*; that which is produced, or the *effect*; and the *positive influence* of the cause in the production of the effect, or the *causality*. Everything depends upon this positive influence in the production in order that a thing may be called a 'cause.' For this influence to be really causal, it must *affect the being* of a thing in its *production* (positive and ontological). Production means the bringing of a substantial or accidental thing from a state of potentiality to a state of actuality. Such a production evidently affects the 'being' or entity of a thing in some productive manner. This positive productive ontological (real) influence on the being of a thing is the most important factor in causality. Mere external sequence or connection on the part of two things is not sufficient to bring them into the relation of cause and effect. For example, the fact that one train follows another along the tracks establishes no causal relation between them; for the connection between them is purely extrinsic. Cause cannot be a purely *logical principle*; for a purely logical influence of one thing on another is insufficient to constitute causality. For instance, the principle of non-contradiction exerts a tremendous influence upon all our thinking. Its influence is 'logical' and not 'ontological'. This principle does *not produce* our thinking, nor does it confer anything toward the production of the *entity* of our thought. For in fact it is the intellect which actually produces our thought and as such is its 'cause'. The influence of the cause may be either corporeal (e.g., seed producing a plant) or

spiritual (e.g., the intellect producing thought). But in order that such an influence partakes of the nature of causality it must be *ontologically and positively productive of being* in some manner.

Cause and Principle: As we have already seen, *a principle is that from which something proceeds in any way whatsoever*. It implies two factors: every principle is *prior* to that which proceeds from it, and that this priority is grounded in the things themselves because of some *special connection* existing between them. ‘Principle’ is also distinct from ‘cause’. *Every cause is a principle, but not every principle is a cause*. A cause is always a ‘principle’, because it is a thing from which another (effect) proceeds. A cause is that which exerts a positive influence in the *production* of a thing; whereas there are principles which do not produce anything. The concept of ‘principle’ is thus wider than that of ‘cause’. For something to be a real cause three conditions must be fulfilled. First of all, the cause must be a real and *positive entity*. A negation or privation is never given the name of a ‘cause’. A negation or privation is the absence of entity and as such is actually nothing. But what is actually nothing cannot exert a positive influence in the production of anything. Thus the cause must really contribute some *influence* in the production of the effect. For cause is conceived as a principle of production. The effect is the result of a production originated in the cause. If the cause exerted no positive influence, this production could never originate, and hence the effect would never come into being. Therefore, a mere precedence in time or place is not sufficient to be a cause. Finally, the effect must be *really distinct* from the producing cause. The cause ‘produces’ the effect. Thus it must produce something distinct from itself. If the effect were not distinct from the producing cause, the cause would of necessity *produce itself*, although such a production is quite absurd and impossible. Hence the effect and the producing principle must be distinct.

2.2. MAIN KINDS OF CAUSE

Two main theories have attempted to give an adequate explanation of the facts of change in the universe: *mechanism* and *naturalism*. The theory of materialistic mechanism maintains that the ultimate constituent particles of matter are homogeneous in character, actuated by purely mechanical forces which produce only local motion. According to this explanation the only causes existing in nature are efficient causes. The theory of *naturalism*, as advocated by Aristotle and the scholastics, maintains that the beings possess a ‘nature,’ in virtue of which they are specifically distinct substances with specific properties and activities. Each material nature is a compound consisting of a ‘material’ and a ‘formal’ element as its constituent causes. By means of their powers and actions they change other beings—either in an accidental or substantial manner—thereby acting as ‘efficient’ causes. Such changes do not occur in an entirely haphazard manner. On the contrary, the hierarchical arrangement of natural beings according to a definite plan by physical laws, seems to show clearly that all things in the universe follow certain tendencies and ends. According to the theory of naturalism, thus, four types of causes account for the ‘how’ and ‘why’ of all beings: *material, formal, efficient, and final*.

Aristotle, the first to attempt a thorough analysis of causes, gives the following explanation of the number and character of the four causes just mentioned. “We aim at understanding, and since we never reckon that we understand a thing till we can give an account of its ‘how and why,’ it is clear that we must look into the ‘how and why’ of things coming into existence and passing out of it, or more generally into the essential constituents of physical change, in order to trace back any object of our study to the principles so ascertained... Well, then (1) the existence of *material* for the generating process to start from (whether specifically or generically considered) is one of the

essential factors we are looking for. Such is the bronze for the statue, or the silver for the phial (material causes). Then, naturally (2) the thing in question cannot be there unless the material has actually received the *form* or characteristics of the type, conformity to which brings it within the definition of the thing we say it is, whether specifically or generically. Thus the interval between two notes is not an octave unless the notes are in the ratio of 2 to 1; nor do they stand at a musical interval at all unless they conform to one or other of the recognized ratios (formal causes). Then, again (3) there must be something to initiate the process of the change or its cessation when the process is completed, such as the act of a voluntary agent of the smith, (for instance, making a bronze statue, as mentioned in Bk. II, Ch. II), or the father who begets a child, or more generally the prime-conscious or unconscious-*agent* that produces the effect and starts the material on its way to the product, changing it from what it was to what it is to be (efficient causes). And lastly, (4) there is the *end* or *purpose*, for the sake of which the process is initiated, as when a human takes exercise for the sake of his health. 'Why does he take exercise?' We ask. And the answer 'Because he thinks it good for his health' satisfies us. (Final causes). Then there are all the intermediary agents, which are set in motion by the prime agent and make for the goal, as means to the goal. Such are the reduction of superfluous flesh and purgation, or drugs and surgical instruments, as means to health. For both actions and tools may be means, or '*media*' through which the efficient cause reaches the end aimed at. This is a rough classification of the causal determinants of things."

If we want to determine why there are just *four causes*, no more and no less, the *necessity* lies in the following reasons: A cause is that on which the production of a being depends. This caused being can be considered in a twofold way. If we consider it absolutely, the cause of the being-making it to be actually what it is—is its *form* (*formal cause*). If we consider it as a potential being becoming an actual being, two factors are necessary to reduce it from potency to act. There must be the material factor, or *matter* which is reduced from potency to act (*material cause*); and there must be the *agent* which reduces it from potency to act (*efficient cause*). Since an agent can act only according to the tendency of its own determined nature which implies a definite direction or end; this *end* also determines the production of the caused being (*final cause*). To put it in a different way: There are four questions which can be asked of a thing, in order to explain the 'how and why' of its being. If we ask '*by what* is it made?' the answer is 'by the efficient cause.' If we ask '*out of what* is it made?' the answer is 'out of its material, its material cause.' If we ask '*through what* is it made?' the answer is 'through its form, its formal cause.' And if we ask '*on account of what* is it made?' the answer is 'on account of the end or purpose which induced the agent to act.' By answering these questions we obtain the various determining factors which explain the production of the thing and make it to be what it is. Since these answers explain the whole thing in its being and production, we have all the causes which account for its 'how and why', and these causes are just four in number.

We will study these four causes further grouping them into two: intrinsic cause and extrinsic cause. An *intrinsic cause* is that which is inadequately distinct from the effect. The intrinsic causes are material cause and formal cause. Matter and form are constitutive principles of things entering into the very composition of their being. This is especially the case with material beings where prime matter (substantial matter) and substantial form are the essential constitutive principles which combine to constitute the material compound. An *extrinsic cause* is that which is adequately distinct from the effect. The two extrinsic causes are efficient cause and final cause. They do not enter into the composition of the being of things, but act upon them 'from without'. These two types of causes

(efficient and final causes) are found in material as well as in spiritual beings. Their nature is more of a metaphysical character.

2.3. INTRINSIC CAUSES: MATERIAL CAUSE AND FORMAL CAUSE

Material cause: When things change, there is always a *substratum* (an underlying principle) which persists throughout the process of change. This substratum is something indifferent, potential, receptive, passive, determinable, and actualisable. It is that which is changed, determined, actualized. This substratum is that out of which something becomes or is made. This is called the *matter* or material cause. In an *accidental* change this matter or material cause is the *complete substance* which acquires some accidental act or form. For example, a block of marble has the potentiality of receiving the shape of a statue, a column, an urn, a fountain, a bench, a table, etc. It is the matter or material out of which any of these things can be fashioned. In a *substantial* change, there is the change of one substance into another as when non-living substance is changed into living substance. This substratum is the *prime matter*. It is present in all organic and non-organic elements. It is present when the elements are changed into the living substance of the plant. It is also present when the plant substance is digested by the animal and becomes animal substance. Hence prime matter is the principle of the capacity, or potentiality, of being changed from one kind of substance into another. Hence prime matter is a true cause (material cause) *out of which* something is made. It is the inner principle of potentiality and limitation. *Formal cause:* Formal cause is the correlative of the material cause. Matter and form always go together since they are related to each other as act and potency. Matter is indefinite, whereas form is definite. Matter is passive, whereas form is active. Matter is receptive, whereas form is the received. Matter is potentiality, whereas form is act. Matter is determinable, whereas form determines. Matter is actualisable, whereas form actualizes. Matter is that ‘out of which’ something is made, whereas form is that ‘through which’ a thing is made to be what it is.

Since changes are accidental or substantial, the form acquired in the change will also be *accidental or substantial*. An accidental form is some quality determining the complete substance, such as quality or quantity, or a modification of quality or quantity. When a drop of water freezes, the crystalline structure is an accidental form. When the mind thinks, these thoughts are accidental forms or acts perfecting the perfectible mind. In all these cases, the substance as such remains intact throughout the change. But in substantial changes, the *nature or substance* is transformed into a new nature or substance through the acquiring of a new substantial form. The substantial form united with prime matter constitutes a *specific nature*. It is that essential and constitutive principle which makes a human to be specifically a human, a lion to be specifically a lion, a dog to be specifically a dog, and so forth. Prime matter is common to all these beings. If matter were the only essential principle present in them, there would be no specific difference between them. What makes them specifically different among themselves is the specifically different substantial form present in them, determining the indifferent prime matter to be just this kind of being and no other. When the substantial form changes, the species changes. The substantial form is intrinsically united to prime matter and takes away all its indifference and indeterminateness from the latter. The substantial form is truly a *cause* as it assists intrinsically in the production of a being by means of a positive influence. For, together with prime matter it is a *constitutive principle* of the composite substance, determining it essentially in the line of substantiality and specific perfection. It actualizes the potentiality of prime matter and makes it to be a definite substance of a definite species. All material

beings are thus essentially composed of prime matter and substantial form, called *hylomorphic theory*.

2.4. EXTRINSIC CAUSES: EFFICIENT CAUSE, FINAL CAUSE AND EXEMPLARY CAUSE

Efficient cause is that *by which* something is produced. A being of one kind is changed into a being of another kind by means of the action of the agent or efficient cause. Of all the causes which assist in the production of an effect by means of a positive influence, the efficient cause is recognized as a *true cause* which has an unmistakable influence on an effect. When a mason builds a brick wall, one's action certainly influences its making, and the mason is the efficient cause of the wall. When the expansive power of electricity drives a train along the rails, its action produces the motion and it is the efficient cause of the motion. When hydrogen and oxygen are brought together under proper conditions, their action upon each other results in the formation of water. They are the efficient cause of the new compound. And so is it with other agencies in nature. Whenever a real production takes place, the agent responsible for it is an efficient cause.

Efficient cause may be viewed from a variety of standpoints which gives rise to a number of classifications. First cause and second cause: *First cause* is the one whose causality is *absolutely independent* of any other cause or being, and on which all other causality depends. This is God who is absolutely independent of all other causes. God is the uncaused cause of all other causes. *Second cause* is the one whose causality is dependent on some other cause or being. All creatures are second causes as they depend on the First Cause. *Physical and moral cause*: A 'physical' cause is one which produces an effect by its own *direct action*. For example: the carpenter who makes a table, the boxer who defeats his opponent by knocking him unconscious, the boy who throws a snowball through a window, the violinist who draws his bow across the strings, the philosopher who thinks. A 'moral' cause is one which *induces a free agent to act*. This may be done by an appeal, by a threat, by a promise, etc. For instance, a politician is a moral cause, when one induces an official to give him/her a position by paying a sum of money. A criminal, who extracts money from a victim by means of blackmail, is a moral cause. *Principal and instrumental cause*: A 'principal' cause is an efficient cause which produces an effect *in virtue of its own power*. An 'instrumental' cause is an efficient cause which produces an effect *in virtue of the power of another cause*. Principal and instrumental causes are correlatives; the one implies the other. A carpenter uses a saw to cut a piece of wood; the saw is the instrumental cause, the carpenter is the principal cause. A hunter kills a deer by shooting it with a rifle; the rifle is the instrumental cause performing its action under the direction and control of the hunter. It should be noted that both causes exert their own distinct causality. The saw cuts and the rifle shoots; but they would not act at all and not in this particular manner, were it not for the direction and control of the principal cause. *Cause per se and cause per accidents*: A cause is said to be a cause *per se*, if it has the *natural tendency* to produce a particular effect or if it is a free agent that *intends freely* to produce it. It is a cause *per accidents*, if it produces an effect toward which it has *no natural tendency* and without a free intention. When I take a hammer and deliberately drive a nail into a board, I am the cause *per se* that the nail enters the wood; but if I thereby hit my finger, I am the cause *per accidents* for that, because I did not intend that particular effect as the result of my hammering. *Proximate and remote causes*: A 'proximate' cause is one which produces its effect *directly*, in virtue of its own action, without using the action of some intermediate cause. When I walk, eat, push a cart, swing a stick, catch a ball, etc., I am the proximate cause of these effects, because they are the results of my own direct action.

A 'remote' cause is one which produces an effect through the direct action of some *intermediary cause* or causes. When my finger pulls the trigger of a rifle and explodes the charge of the cartridge, a bullet is ejected which travels through the air and kills a deer at a considerable distance; the bullet is the proximate cause of the death of the deer, while the exploding charge, the action of my hand and arm, and the deciding influence of my will are the remote causes of the killing. Naturally, the ultimate cause in this particular chain of causes is myself. *Total and partial cause*: A cause is said to be 'total', when the *entire* effect is produced by its action; if only a *part* of the entire effect is attributed to a particular cause, it is a 'partial' cause. The masons, carpenters, plumbers, plasterers, etc., who assist in the construction of a building, are all part-causes of the construction. But when I lift a plank, push a table, walk a mile, dig a hole, throw a ball, etc., I am the total cause of these effects. *Coordinated and subordinated causes*: Coordinated cause is the same as partial cause and thus accounts for only part of the effect; whereas subordinated cause is a cause which depends upon another cause. If such a cause depends upon another cause for the exercise of its causality, it is called an *essentially subordinated* cause. Such a cause produces the whole effect, but in dependence upon the other cause. For instance, the chisel of a sculptor is a cause which exercises influence upon the whole statue, but is dependent upon the sculptor in the very exercise of its causality. If a cause depends upon another cause, but not in the exercise of its causality, it is said to be *accidentally subordinated* to this cause. For example, a son depends upon his father for his existence as upon a superior cause, but in the act of generating a son the latter does not depend upon his father. Hence the son is only accidentally subordinated to his father in so far as the act of generating a son is concerned. *Univocal and equivocal cause*: A 'univocal' cause is one which produces an effect *similar to itself in nature*. For instance, coconut produces a coconut, dog a dog, human a human. Living beings, therefore, which reproduce their own kind, are univocal causes in this respect, because these effects are similar to themselves in nature. An 'equivocal' cause is one which produces an effect *dissimilar to itself in nature*. A painter is the equivocal cause of paintings, a writer of writings, a builder of buildings, because the effects are different in nature from oneself as their cause. *Necessary and free cause*: A 'necessary' cause is a cause which is *determined by its nature* to produce a certain effect when the required conditions are present. If I throw a stone into the air, gravity must pull it back to the earth, because gravity is a necessary cause and is determined to a definite time of action without choice. A 'free' cause is a cause which is *not compelled or determined to act*, even though all the required conditions for action are present. For example, a human is free in very many of one's actions, like walking, eating, smoking, playing etc. One can perform them or omit them, as one chooses.

Final cause is that for the sake of which an efficient cause acts. It is the end or intention which determines the action of the efficient cause in the production of something else. This intention or end *induces* the agent to act, and determines the *kind* and the *manner* of action so that the end or purpose may be achieved. For example, when a carpenter intends to make a chair, he selects the wood, cuts it into proper lengths, and nails them together according to a plan determined by the particular kind of chair one desires.

Exemplary cause is that in imitation of which something comes into being from the intention of an agent that determines its end for itself, e.g., drawing the picture of a flower on the board. The flower is the exemplary cause and the picture is the effect. In this definition the words—*a form in imitation of which*—indicate the idea which serves as a model, since the idea is the same as the form which a thing imitates. *According to the intention of an agent* - excludes the possibility that the likeness

comes about by accident. *That determines its end for itself* - indicates that there can be question of exemplary causality only if the agent determines the end for itself and not if the end is determined by another. In other words, only in the case of rational agents who are directed in their action by their ideas is there the question of exemplary causality. The exemplary cause is a *true cause*; for it exercises a positive influence upon the being of the effect inasmuch as it influences the intellectual agent to act in a definite way. It is *not an efficient cause*; for it is not of itself the first principle of movement in the order of execution, but merely the form in imitation of which something comes to be. Hence it belongs to the order of intention rather than to the order of execution. It is also *not formally the same as the final cause*. For, formally speaking, the final cause moves the agent to act insofar as it is a purpose to be achieved; whereas the exemplary cause specifies the effect to be produced since it is the form to be imitated in the effect. However, *materially* speaking, the final and the exemplary causes are the same. For it is the specific form which, insofar as apprehended as good, moves the agent as the final cause. Insofar as it specifies the action of the agent, it directs the agent as its exemplary cause. Now we know the reason why exemplary cause is called a *formal extrinsic* cause. It is formal because it specifies the effect; it is extrinsic because it specifies the effect not from within but from without.

Effect: Effect is that which proceeds from another, totally or partially. The effects depend upon their causes ontologically and are similar to them. *Ontologically* means according to the order of Being. *Depend* means to proceed from another in some way according to its being. *Similarity* means partial *correspondence between distinct beings*. They are two kinds: positive and negative. *Positive similarity* is correspondence according to a perfection, e.g., two persons who have equal height. *Negative similarity* is correspondence according to a defect, e.g., two persons who are blind.

2.5. ALLIED CONCEPTS: CONDITION, OCCASION, SUFFICIENT REASON, AND CHANCE

Cause is an ontological principle which exercises a *positive* influence in the production of something else. In this way, cause is distinct from condition, which does not exercise a positive influence in the production of something. A condition is only a prerequisite for the action of the cause. *Condition is that which is required in order that an efficient cause can act*, but it does not contribute any positive influence toward the production of the effect itself. The distinction between cause and condition may be illustrated by the following example. A stone of fifty kilogram is firmly held in place by the suction of mud in a swamp. The effort of a single person to lift it up is in vain. Another person comes to the person's help. They then lift the stone together. Both of them exercise positive influence upon the effect, viz., the change in the position of the stone. However, if one of them limits oneself to the removing of mud around the stone and leaves the rest to the other, the one would not exercise any positive influence upon the change of position. But one's action would remove the obstacle which prevents one from lifting the stone. Here, one's role is only *dispositive* and not positive.

An *occasion* exercises positive influence insofar as it helps to induce a free agent to produce an effect. *It is a circumstance or combination of circumstances which provide a favourable opportunity for the free exercise of a cause*, e.g., a crowd is an occasion for a pickpocket to ply his trade. However, a free cause can exercise its causality even when there is no favourable opportunity. Hence occasion differs from condition insofar as its influence is positive. Occasion also differs from cause insofar as its influence is not necessary for the production of the effect.

The *sufficient reason* is also distinct from cause. Sufficient reason provides an adequate explanation for the 'being' of a thing. It does not have to be *really distinct* from the thing whose 'being' is explained by it; whereas the cause of a thing is always *really distinct* from it. Otherwise the thing *would* be the cause of itself. Hence, we can say that every being has a sufficient reason of being, but not every being is caused. If the essence of a thing is really identical with its 'being', this essence is the sufficient reason for its 'being'. But if an essence is really distinct from its 'being', the sufficient reason for its 'being' must be found outside the essence. Hence a cause is a sufficient reason for the 'being' of something else.

Chance is an effect produced by the concurrence of two or more causes which operate independently and thus produce an effect which is *unforeseen* by anyone who does not know that several causes are at work or how these causes operate. If the activity of all the causes involved is foreseen, the effect cannot be attributed to chance. For instance, if one considers that a pirate buried the chest in a particular spot, and someone else later starts digging in exactly the same place, the treasure trove is not the effect of chance with respect to that person. But if one does not consider the effect produced by one of these causes, the pirate, the finding of the treasure happens 'by chance'. Therefore, chance exists only in the mind of one who does not know all the causes which exercise influence upon the effect.

Check Your Progress

Note: use the space provided for your Answers

1) What are the main divisions of cause?

2) Explain the relation between cause and its allied concepts such as condition, occasion, chance, and sufficient reason.

2.6. LET US SUM UP

Cause is a real principle which positively brings about an effect. A cause is always a real principle from which effect proceeds. Traditionally, cause has been identified as material, formal, efficient, and final, following the teaching of Aristotle. Later philosophers have further grouped them into two: intrinsic cause and extrinsic cause. An *intrinsic cause* is that which is inadequately distinct from the effect. The intrinsic causes are material cause and formal cause. Matter and form are constitutive principles of things entering into the very composition of their being. An *extrinsic cause* is that which is adequately distinct from the effect. The two extrinsic causes are efficient cause and final cause. They do not enter into the composition of the being of things, but act upon them 'from

without.' Cause, as an ontological principle, is distinct from condition which does not exercise a positive influence in the production of something, but is only a prerequisite for the action of the cause. Cause is also distinct from occasion which provides a favourable opportunity for the free exercise of a cause. Condition is distinct from sufficient reason, which is adequate explanation for something. Sufficient reason challenges the possibility of chance, which is an effect produced by the concurrence of two or more causes operating independently and thus produce an effect which is *unforeseen* by anyone.

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UNIT 3 BEING AND ANALOGY

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- 3.0. Objectives
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3.0. OBJECTIVES

Being is that which is in some way or something. Humans encounter Being in the horizon of history which is also the horizon of Being. This historical horizon of Being includes, in a special way, the metaphysical horizons of the West and India. In this Unit we study the relation between Being and analogy:

- From Western perspectives
 - From Indian perspectives
 - From a comparative perspective
-

3.1. INTRODUCTION

Being is that which is in some way or something. That which is in some way or something, comes to us in many ways, in and through each and every being that we encounter in the horizon of history which is also the horizon of Being. Insofar as it comes to us we understand it. As we understand it we are able to consider it as it is, inasmuch as it is, i.e., being as being. But the moment we make an effort to grasp it, to understand it fully, it escapes us in some way, goes away from us without leaving us completely. The finite being is the 'junction' of this 'coming' and 'going'. It is the 'meeting point' of the 'arrival' and 'departure' of Being. Being does not meet each being in the same way, but distinctly in the horizon of the same Being, which is originally, one. Each being is both identical with and distinct from both Being and beings. It is identical with being (one) insofar as each being is in being belonging to Being; it is also distinct from being (many) since it is not the absolute fullness of Being. Hence every being is an identity-in-distinction or one-in-many. But each being is not a one-in-many in the same way, but differently, in its own way, in an analogous way. Each being is analogous because being itself is originally analogous; for Being, that which is in some way, is in its own way. In other words, Being is analogous in itself. It is 'realized' diversely, yet proportionately, in all beings whatever.

3.2. ANALOGY OF BEING FROM WESTERN PERSPECTIVES

There is a steady dynamism in human knowledge which assumes the form of a dialectical process. This dynamism proceeds beyond everything laid down in concepts, unfolding the conditioned and limited nature of knowledge. In the awareness of the limit as limit, the human intellect goes beyond the limit, pushing our thematic knowledge of being ever further and deeper. However, our knowledge can never be fully conceptualized. This dialectics of our knowledge about Being is a manifestation of the *analogy of Being*. The term 'analogy' has its origin in the Greek mathematical vocabulary. There it meant sameness of ratio or proportion between the respective terms of different pairs. "Two is to four as three is to six" exhibits the same proportion or ratio in each pair, that of

half. Outside arithmetic the sameness does not have to be equality, for instance: “As a point is to a line so a surface is to a solid”, or “As sharp is to the sense of touch, so is shrill to the sense of hearing”. The sameness of proportion in such cases is not equality but merely similarity. It is a likeness in the respective ways in which the terms are related to each other in pairs, and the likeness is found in a feature that differentiates the instances. Conversely, the various instances while different in themselves exhibit in that very difference itself sufficient similarity to require expression in one and the same notion. The one identical notion is partly the same and partly different. The sameness and the difference are in the one notion.

Before we analyze the concept of analogy further we shall consider the meaning of the terms ‘univocal’, ‘equivocal’ and ‘analogous’. *Univocal term* is one which is said of many in a way which is always the same. It designates a number of things in an identical sense. It is predicated of diverse things according to exactly the same concept. For example, the term ‘metal’ can be used to designate gold, silver, copper, tin, etc. An *Equivocal term* is one which stands for concepts with totally different meanings, and thus also for totally different things. It stands for diverse things with diverse meanings. It is predicated of diverse things according to an entirely different concept,

- e.g., Bark - bark of a dog.
 - bark of a tree.
- Pen - an instrument for writing.
 - an enclosure for animals.
- Coach - a vehicle.
 - an athletic director.
- Page - a leaf of a book.
 - an attendant at court.

An *Analogous term* is one which is said of many in a way which is somewhat same and somewhat different. It is one and the same name predicated of many according to concepts which are not entirely different, but agree in some common point. In analogous predication the external term remains the same, but the concept of which the term is a symbol neither remains exactly the same, as is the case in univocal predication, nor becomes entirely different, as happens in equivocal predication, but *varies*, i.e., while changing it retains something. The reason why it does not remain exactly the same is that such a concept does not completely abstract from the differences of its inferiors. As a result, these differences have to be taken into consideration when the concept is predicated of different subjects. Thus the unity of such a concept is not absolute but only relative. For example, when my eyes perceive a material object, I can say: “I see”; and when my intellect understands a problem, I can also say: “I see”. The act of sense perception in the first instance is completely different from that of intellectual perception. Nevertheless, there is a certain relative unity because as the eye is related to sense perception, so the intellect is related to intellectual perception. Consequently, one and the same term may be used to express both actions. But when one predicates this term of the eye and of the intellect, the concept signified by the term “to see” has to be adjusted accordingly as required by the subject (the eye or the intellect). In this way, one concept can be predicated of things which are completely different insofar as they are relatively the same. It is the condition of the possibility of both univocal and equivocal terms. Univocal and equivocal terms presuppose analogous terms; for without the ultimate, all-encompassing unity, all beings and all relations between beings would disappear. This ultimate unity is no longer univocal but analogous. In other words, univocal and equivocal terms presuppose a plurality of different

contents which are separated from each other. At the same time they presuppose an ordered unity of different beings. Such a unity can only be analogous.

An analogous term implies two analogues: *primary analogue* and *secondary analogue*.

Primary analogue is the object which first deserves the term or of which it is first predicated. *Secondary analogue* is the object which possesses in a lesser degree the perfection indicated by the term or to which the term is later applied. In other words, the primary analogue means the analogue to which such a term belongs principally, and secondary analogues are analogues of which such a term is predicated in dependence upon the primary analogue. For example, if one predicates "healthy" of human, fresh air, and medicine, human is the primary analogue, and fresh air and medicine are the secondary analogues.

Analogy is broadly distinguished into *intrinsic* and *extrinsic*. *Intrinsic analogy* is one in which the term is verified according to its definition in both the primary and secondary analogues. It can be further distinguished into two: *intrinsic analogy of participation* and *intrinsic analogy of proportionality*. *Intrinsic analogy of participation* is the analogy in which the analogues not only verify the *definition* of the perfection, but also stand to one another in a relation of participation of that perfection, e.g., finite intelligence and infinite intelligence. Here finite intelligence intrinsically participates in the perfection of the infinite intelligence of God. *Intrinsic analogy of proportionality* is the analogy in which the analogues verify the definition of the perfection with a certain similitude of proportions, e.g., the proportions of their intelligence to their respective essences. Perhaps this fact can be made clear by illustration. Intelligence is certainly an analogous concept: God is intelligent; angel is intelligent; human is intelligent. In all these, intelligence is an intrinsic reality; yet it differs widely in each case. Intelligence as predicated of God differs widely from intelligence as predicated of angel or human. The concept as applied to all these beings manifests a proportion between two notes in the concept of this perfection; and the proportion must vary in accordance with the nature of each individual or class of individuals, and still retain the same fundamental definition, so that intelligence in all these may be said to be somewhat same and somewhat different. The following may serve as a formulation of this proportion: *Intelligence is to the nature of God as it is to the nature of an angel as it is to the nature of human*. Certainly there is proportional similarity in these concepts, although this proportion does not postulate identity of concept. In God, the proportion is of identity. With the angel, on the contrary, because of the real distinction between its essence and being, the proportion is quite different; and human, whose essence is a composite of spiritual form with matter, must have the grade of intelligence demanded by such a nature. *Extrinsic analogy* is the one in which the term is predicated only according to its definition of the primary analogue, while it is predicated of the secondary analogues in a connected sense which may fall short or go beyond that of the definition. It can also be further distinguished into two: *attribution* and *proportionality*. *Extrinsic analogy of attribution* is analogy in which the nature signified by the concept is intrinsically realized only in the primary analogue, but attributed to the others only insofar as they have a relationship to the primary analogue. The traditional example is the concept of health. We say: Philip is healthy; fresh air is healthy; medicine is healthy. In its proper and accepted meaning health means that the various parts of a living body function properly in relation to the whole. Hence the perfection of health is intrinsically realized in the primary analogue, Philip. When health is predicated of fresh air and medicine, it is attributed to them merely because in fresh air and medicine there is something by which they are related to the health of a living body as contributing factors of health. Hence in calling them healthy one merely

wants to affirm this relationship. For this reason fresh air, medicine, etc. are said to be healthy by relation, attribution, or extrinsic predication. The analogy of attribution is thus also called analogy of relation or proportion. *Extrinsic analogy of proportionality (metaphorical analogy)* is analogy in which the nature signified by the term is realized formally and intrinsically in one of the analogues; and in the other or others extrinsically and virtually, i.e., only with respect to a secondary characteristic, such as the activity, proper to this nature. Take for example, the term “lion”. The nature signified by the term is realized formally and intrinsically only in the animal called “lion”. A human cannot be called lion in the formal sense; for a lion is essentially irrational, whereas human is essentially rational. However, it is proper to the nature of a lion to act courageously in the face of danger. Hence we may consider this secondary aspect of the nature of a lion and predicate the term “lion” of a human who is courageous. In doing so we convey the idea that in the face of danger this human acts in the same way as a lion is supposed to act. Hence we say that ‘he is a lion’ because of his resemblance to a lion in the order of activity.

Being is neither Univocal nor Equivocal but Analogous: At first Being is *not a univocal concept*. For a univocal concept abstracts from the differences of its inferiors, whereas Being actually includes these differences. For instance, a substance is a being in the sense of something whose being is a being in itself. An accident is a being in the sense of something whose being is a being in another. Again God’s being is different from that of any creature because unlike any creature He is His own being. Hence it is clear that the diversity of relationship to Being prevents the univocal predication of Being. Secondly, Being is *not equivocal*. For, if equivocity occurs when there is no foundation in reality why should diverse things be called by the same name? But we predicate the name ‘Being’ of diverse things because each of them is something which has a reference to Being. Hence there is a foundation in reality for the predication of the term, so that Being is not equivocal. Consequently, it follows by exclusion that the notion of *Being is analogous*. Since we have thus distinguished two modes of analogy, *intrinsic and extrinsic*, we must now investigate which mode of analogy applies to the notion of Being. For obvious reasons we can immediately exclude *extrinsic analogy of proportionality or metaphorical analogy*. For otherwise, many beings would be beings only according to a secondary aspect; with regard to their primary aspect these beings would be non-beings, which is impossible. Being is thus analogous according to the *intrinsic analogy of participation and proportionality*. *Intrinsic analogy of participation* rests on a relation of participation by which the finite beings participate in the Infinite Being. *Intrinsic analogy of proportionality* rests on a similitude of proportions in which each being is a proportion of the act of existing to its essence. Is Being also analogous by *extrinsic analogy of attribution*? As we have seen above, a term is analogous by analogy of attribution if the perfection signified by it is found intrinsically in the primary analogue, and is attributed to others only because of a consideration of their causal relationship to the primary analogue. Now the perfection of Being is realized intrinsically in each of the analogues. Hence, it is clear that—formally speaking—Being cannot be analogous by extrinsic analogy of attribution.

3.3. ANALOGY OF BEING FROM INDIAN PERSPECTIVES

The Indian philosophical tradition approves that the question of Being assigned to a specific philosophical discipline such as ontology (General Metaphysics), is a symptomatically Western phenomenon. Yet Being (*sat*) is thematic in the Vedic and Upanishadic texts, and it remains a recurrent topic in later traditions. In one of the passages of the Chandogya Upanishad, Uddalaka Aruni teaches his son Svetaketu: “In the beginning, my dear, this world was just Being (*sat*), one

only, without a second. To be sure, some people say: 'In the beginning this world was just non-being (*asat*), one only, without a second; from that non-being Being was produced.' But verily, my dear, whence could this be?...How, from non-being could Being be produced? On the contrary, my dear, in the beginning this world was just Being, one only, without a second" (*Ch. Up.*, VI. 2, 1-2).

The text itself indicates that it is preceded by earlier discussions about Being and non-being. The theory of the origination of Being from non-being, to which the text explicitly refers, is found not only in the Upanishads, but also in the Brahmanas, and even in the Rgveda itself. Norman Brown has proposed a concrete cosmological interpretation of the Rgvedic uses of *sat* and *asat* as we find them in the famous hymn X.129, or in X.72, according to which *sat* would be realm of humans and gods and of the cosmic order (*rta*), and *asat*, the chaotic underworld of the demons. Discussions of *sat* and *asat* in the Brahmana texts are usually in the line of ritualistic and mythical identifications and personifications. There are very few philosophically significant occurrences like the equation what is (*asti*) with what is 'immortal' in the *Satapatha Brahmana*. Being in this sense is a familiar characteristic of Brahman, and they (Being and Brahman) may even be used as synonyms.

There is no systematically developed terminology of Being in the Upanishads, and the applicability of *sat* to *Brahman* in its primeval unity often remains ambiguous. It is obvious that in these discussions the question of unity takes precedence over the question of Being. The *Brhadaranyaka Upanishad* associates *sat* with that aspect of Brahman, which is 'formed,' 'mortal,' and 'stationary,' and then it is contrasted with the other aspect of Brahman, which remains beyond (*tyat*). The *Taittiriya Upanishad* referring to the same terminology of *sat* and *tyat*, presents *sat* and its separation from *tyat* as a result of Brahman's self-procreation, putting *sat* on the side of the 'defined,' 'based,' 'conscious,' 'real.' Being in these passages appears as a step into diversity. Brahman is Being insofar as it coincides with the world, with what there is. But there remains the aspect of transcendence, and *sat* alone falls short of the primeval unity of Brahman, as Being is both transcendent and immanent, identity and difference. Entities *are*, but Being alone *is*. Being transcends.

The Advaita Vedanta reflects upon the Upanishads and systematically develops these and similar questions. Sankara's references to Brahman as *sat* or *sanmatra* (pure being) remain somewhat casual; the triad, 'being,' 'consciousness,' 'bliss,' is not found in his authentic writings. Later *advaitins* too seem to be more interested in refuting false conceptions of Being than in establishing their own view of the absolute in terms of Being. However, Mandanamisra devotes special care to re-examining the notion of Being and its applicability to Brahman. 'Pure Beingness' or *sanmatra* is interpreted as the one and all-pervasive content of the immediate, non-relational, pre-predicative perception (*nirvikalpapratyaksa*). The supreme unity of all reality is thus presented as the implicit unconditioned condition of all conditions, namely, percepts, concepts, particulars, categories, imagination, and thought. However, Buddhists generally reject, avoid, or even ridicule any such theorizing in terms of Being, with its connotations of self-nature, permanence, and self-sufficiency.

Being as *Tad Ekam*: Here, in this Unit, the original *Rig Vedic* notion *Tad Ekam* (That One = Being = *Tad Ekam*) is preferred to all other terms as it corresponds well with the notion of Being

as ‘that which is in some way or something.’ The hymn where the notion appears is the *Nasadiya-sukta* (Rgveda X. 129), which has been praised as containing ‘the flower of Indian thought.’ This hymn is the quintessence of Indian metaphysics. All things are traced to one principle. Opposites like being and non-being, life and death, night and day, are shown to be the self-unfolding of ‘That One.’ *Tad Ekam* is the ground of the universe. Because it is devoid of differences and definiteness, it is referred to as ‘That One’ which is in some way. It is neither a particular being nor non-being (nothing) but ‘something’ which is beyond them while being their core and ground, the Unconditioned Condition of all conditions. *Tad Ekam* had within it the latent power out of which the universe, including the gods, emerged. The point to be noted here is the conception of the ultimate Being as dynamic or self-unfolding, and as requiring no outside Power to guide and shape it. It is a hymn of Being. It is an invocation to the Being that transcends all the other beings of knowledge. It provides an experiential insight into the making of that Being. It does not deal with the beginning of the cosmos or with its evolution. It expresses a luminous awareness that Being is beyond being (existent = *sat* = *ens*) and non-being (non-existent = *asat* = *non-ens*). Being is beyond being and non-being while being in them as their only Ground.

The following is a brief summary of the seven stanzas of the hymn: Stanza one: In the hymn, *Tadanim* (“Then”) refers to the time when time was not. In fact, words such as ‘before’ and ‘after’ are not suitable to describe it, as they themselves belong to time-sequence. The Being of beings is neither in space nor in time. It is beyond both, and above all categories of understanding and description. It is the unconditioned condition of all existence. Stanza two: In that state when there was neither space nor time, neither before nor after, neither beginning nor end, neither mortal nor immortal, neither night nor day, there was only the Absolute One, Being itself, self-contained and self-sustained. Stanza three: In the unknown, unknowable, primal state, it was sheer darkness encompassed and concealed by greater darkness. It was a state of absence of all knowledge. Like an absolute expanse of water (ocean), the One (Being) was featureless and distinctionless. The all-embracing and all-transcending *Abbu* was concealed by its indescribable, unaccountable nature, *tuccya*. Its transcendence and self-concealment are accomplished by its own *chit-tapas*. Stanza four: The *manas*, whose basic quality is *karma*, is the faculty by which the One (Being) becomes many (beings); it is the principle by which the immortal *prana* descends into the phenomenal world, by which *sat* becomes *asat*. Stanza five: It is the interaction between the infinite life-power (*anit-svadha*) and consciousness-force (*chit-tapas*) that creates the world of manifestation. With this infinite activity of eternal consciousness came into existence spatial extension. It was the beginning of change in that which was otherwise changeless and immutable. It is a self-initiated, self-caused and self-propelled process. Stanza six: The origin, purpose, and end of the world are totally unknown and unknowable. No one really knows the beginning of the process. When did this diversification originate? The gods cannot explain it as they came into manifestation only after the world was created. Stanza seven: There must be something, supreme and beyond, out of which creation proceeds. Perhaps, there is a witness to all this seated in the seventh heaven, who knows the beginning and the reason of this world-movement. Only he who is beyond space, time, and causation may know it, or he too does not quite know it. Indeed, there can be no such being above or below other than the Supreme One who truly knows of this all. ‘That One’ neither preaches agnosticism nor promotes atheism. It speaks of creation as an unfolding and a fulfilment.

From the analysis of the Hymn we can gather the following meanings. 1) *Tad Ekam* as Mystery: *Tad Ekam* is the mystery of a primal non-differentiation of being and non-being. The origin of the world was enveloped in this primal mystery of *Tad Ekam*, which by its inherent power gave rise to the desire of a creation from which the universe sprang forth through a series of mysterious gradual processes. 2) *Tad Ekam* as the Unconditioned Ground: It is the primal positive absolute being from which the whole existence follows. This primal unconditioned ground (condition) of all beings (conditions) cannot be characterized by anyone as either existent or non-existent. It is the most transcendent which transcends space, time, death, and immortality, and beyond which there cannot be anything. It is the first cause, which breathed by its own power. 3) *Tad Ekam* as the Purely Spiritual Embryo: *Tad Ekam* is the purely spiritual embryo, the world-seed. The void is the envelope of the world embryo which leads to the birth of the world begotten of That One, which is the pure manas in which develops heat, desire, and creative impulse. 4) *Tad Ekam* as Consciousness: The 'heart,' mentioned in the hymn as the place of search, reminds one of the abode of mind, namely, of consciousness, and Brahman. In the world of human experience, consciousness is the only power that embraces the manifold without losing its identity and unity. A multiplicity of thoughts, objects, and contents of consciousness do not disrupt but rather reinforce the unity (That One) of consciousness. Consciousness, as one in many and as the overwhelming plurality of the world of our experience, reverts to a unity in the recesses of our consciousness. Being over and above consciousness is a contradiction in terms; for by the very fact we define 'Being' as 'that which transcends consciousness,' we are including it in our consciousness of Being. Hence, *Tad Ekam* is not the object of consciousness, or even the subject, but pure consciousness which has no support. *Tad Ekam* is this non-support. Thus the understanding of *Tad Ekam* does not allow for this reflection, i.e., for a second understanding of the understanding. If one really understands *Tad Ekam*, one does not understand that one understands it. If one understands that one understands, then one does not understand *Tad Ekam*, but only one's own understanding of it. *Tad Ekam* has no consciousness, but is consciousness. 5) *Tad Ekam* as a Unique Neutral Principle: It is a unique neutral principle, which accounts for the origin of the world and the multiplicity of things. The use of the neuter shows that That One is above sexual difference. 6) *Tad Ekam* as Indefinable: *Tad Ekam* is an indefinable principle with manifested and unmanifested aspects. The entirely undefined principle found itself in darkness till it manifested itself through the power of tapas. 7) *Tad Ekam* as Sat and Asat: Being is That One which has manifested itself, and Non-being is That One which has not manifested itself. Hence, sat and asat, Being and Non-being, are two aspects: the manifested and the unmanifested aspects of the One Ultimate, *Tad Ekam*. 8) *Tad Ekam* as the All-inclusive a priori Condition: *Tad Ekam* is not seen against any horizon as it is the infinite horizon which includes every other horizon. It includes within it both being and non-being. It is the necessary a priori condition of every being and existence. It is the all-encompassing Being, of the positive and the negative, of evil and good, which underlies, penetrates, transforms, and unifies everything that is. 9) *Tad Ekam* as the Eternal Word: The word (Vac) is *Tad Ekam* itself; it is the self of *Tad Ekam*. It is the revelation of *Tad Ekam*. It was before all creation, pre-existing before anything came into being. 10) *Tad Ekam* as Brahman: The Vedas have described the One as neither being nor non-being, and the Gita repeats the same idea by affirming *Tad Ekam* as neither transcendent nor immanent but both at the same time in a unique manner. The Ultimate is the source of all, yet is itself not contained or limited by anything. That One transcends all immanence and is immanent in all transcendence. It is the ultimate cause of the world. It is styled as *ekam*, the One and the only One without a second. It is the transcendent, the *paratpara* which is unqualified and without the

support of laws. It is Brahman himself who exists by his own power, a mystery beyond explanation or utterance.

The term 'analogy' has its origin in the Greek mathematical vocabulary. There it meant sameness of ratio or proportion between the respective terms of different pairs. "Two is to four as three is to six" exhibits the same proportion or ratio in each pair, that of half. Outside arithmetic the sameness does not have to be equality, for instance: "As a point is to a line so a surface is to a solid," or "As sharp is to the sense of touch, so is shrill to the sense of hearing." The sameness of proportion in such cases is not equality but merely similarity. It is a likeness in the respective ways in which the terms are related to each other in pairs, and the likeness is found in a feature that differentiates the instances. Conversely, the various instances while different in themselves exhibit in that very difference itself sufficient similarity to require expression in one and the same notion. The one identical notion is partly the same and partly different. The sameness and the difference are in the one notion. Hence, *analogous term* is one which is said of many, in a way which is somewhat same and somewhat different. It is one and the same name predicated of many according to concepts which are not entirely different, but agree in some common point. In analogous predication the external term remains the same, but the concept of which the term is a symbol neither remains exactly the same, as is the case of univocal predication, nor becomes entirely different, as happens in equivocal predication, but *varies*, i.e., while changing it retains something. The reason why it does not remain exactly the same is that such a concept does not completely abstract from the differences of its inferiors. As a result, these differences have to be taken into consideration when the concept is predicated of different subjects. Thus the unity of such a concept is not absolute but only relative. For example, when my eyes perceive a material object, I can say: "I see"; and when my intellect understands a problem, I can also say: "I see". The act of sense perception in the first instance is completely different from that of intellectual perception. Nevertheless, there is a certain relative unity, because as the eye is related to sense perception so the intellect is related to intellectual perception. Consequently, one and the same term may be used to express both actions. But when one predicates this term of the eye and of the intellect, the concept signified by the term "to see" has to be adjusted according as required by the subject (the eye or the intellect). In this way, one concept can be predicated of things which are completely different insofar as they are relatively the same.

Meaning of Maya: *Tad Ekam* however did express itself in manifoldness. Assuming name and form (*namarupa*) it became this entire universe. The key word used for explaining the manifested aspect of *Tad Ekam* (*Brahman*) is *maya* which has multiple meanings. Basically it is the manifestative (creative) and manifested power (creation) of *Brahman*. *Maya* reveals and conceals *Brahman*. As *maya* reveals, it is a projection of *Brahman* (*vikshepa*). What is thus projected is not *Brahman* but only a *namarupa* (name and form) of *Brahman*, which inevitably conceals *Brahman* in itself. Hence *maya* is the *avarana* (veil) of *Brahman*, the *avarana-vikshepa*, the concealing-revealing dynamism of *Tad Ekam*. What is revealed is only a means to understand what is not yet revealed. The plurality is understood as the expression of *Tad Ekam* revealing and concealing the same in all its manifestations. Since *maya* is *avarana* and *vikshepa*, concealing and revealing, it is *sat* and *asat*, real and non-real. Insofar as *maya* manifests *Brahman* it is said to be real; but insofar as *maya* conceals *Brahman*, pointing to that which is really real, it is said to be unreal. Therefore *maya* is defined as *sat-asat-anirvachaniya*, an

indefinable being and non-being. So according to the *maya* theory, both *Brahman* and the universe are real but not in the same way, but each in its own way.

Maya as Analogy: Aquinas developed the notion of analogy of participation under the influence of the Aristotelian and Neo-Platonic Greek thought. It was Plotinus (270 A.D) who maintained that the Absolute Good reflects in all creation in successive levels of participation. Thus the reflection of the Absolute is seen in every being in some way, proportionate to its essence. In the Indian thought *Brahman* is seen as life, mind, consciousness, and bliss respectively. *Brahman* is there in the innermost chamber of one's own existence. *Brahman*, remaining in the centre, yet manifesting itself in all layers and levels of existence, is the real *maya* which is the appearance of *Brahman* in non-*Brahman* forms (*namarupa*). *Maya* assumes a variety of meaning. It points to that internal dynamism in *Brahman*, which makes revelation possible. Thus *Brahman* that is manifested is not *Brahman* but indication to *Brahman*; *maya* is real only insofar as it points to *Brahman*. *Maya* confuses human intelligence with its semblance of reality and leads human to a thorough misunderstanding which tempts one to accept the phenomenal as ultimately real. Hence *maya* is also known as the root cause of all ignorance. *Maya*, however, has its own non-permanent reality which is characterised by being and non-being (*sat-asat*). The *maya* power of *Brahman* by which one becomes many, though one alone is really real, and the *maya* character of the universe by which many appear to be real, though they are ultimately unreal, make the understanding of being possible at two different levels. At both levels being is realized. But they differ greatly in the proportion in which they are realized. Both *Brahman* and *maya* are beings; *Brahman* is pure being (*sat*) and hence really real (*satyasya satya*) and *maya* is being with non-being (*sat-asat*). *Brahman* is the source. *Maya* is being by the unfolding of *Brahman* (*vivarta*), a notion similar to being (*Tad Ekam*) by analogy of participation.

Check Your Progress

Note: use the space provided for your Answers

1) Explain briefly: analogy from Western perspectives

2) Explain briefly: analogy from Indian perspectives

3.4. LET US SUM UP

In the classical Western Philosophy, metaphysics is understood as the core and ground of human knowledge which underlies, penetrates, transforms, and unifies all other disciplines of knowledge.

It originates from the 'experience of something' or Being. That is to say, metaphysics does not restrict itself to any particular being or part of that being, but rather treats of what is *common to all beings*, namely Being which is the ground of beings since all beings are in Being. Being is not a particular thing though it embraces everything in itself. That which is not particular is still *something or in some way*. Hence, *Being is that which is in some way or something*. The original *Rig Vedic* notion of *Tad Ekam* (That One = Being = *Tad Ekam*) corresponds well with the notion of Being as 'that which is in some way or something.' Besides, the multidimensional meaning of *Tad Ekam* as mystery, the unconditioned ground, the purely spiritual embryo, consciousness, unique neutral principle, indefinable, *Sat* and *Asat*, the all-inclusive *a priori* condition, the eternal Word, and Brahman, is in conformity with the classical Western notion of Being which is analogous. We predicate *Tad Ekam* of diverse beings as each of them is something which has a reference to *Tad Ekam*. Hence there is a foundation in reality for the predication of the term, so that *Tad Ekam* is not equivocal. Consequently, it follows by exclusion that the notion of *Tad Ekam* is analogous.

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UNIT 4 BEING AND THE PROBLEM OF ONE AND MANY

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4.0. OBJECTIVES

There is an inseparable relation between One and many. 'Many' cannot be without 'One.' The 'many' has its foundation in the 'One,' which sustains and supports the many. In the same way, the One never remains in isolation apart from 'the many.' It is because the One by its very nature is 'relational,' social, and self-giving by allowing itself to be limited in the finite other so that the finite is made possible by the infinite One. In this Unit a humble attempt is made to:

- Explain the problem of one and many from the philosophical perspectives of the Western and Indian philosophers
 - Establish that Being is One in Many
-

4.1. INTRODUCTION

A discussion on the 'problem of one and many' has been on the increase throughout the centuries. It has been a much debated question both in the East and in the West. It was first posed in the West by the pre-Socratic philosophers. The problem is implicitly present in the discussion of Heraclitus (c. 540-480 BCE) and has its explicit starting point in the fragments of Parmenides' poem which had also much influenced the metaphysical thinking of Plato (428-348 BCE) and Aristotle (384-322 BCE). Lively debates on the problem are also predominantly present in the philosophies of the East, especially in the Vedic, Vedantic, and non-Vedic systems of India. In this article we examine only the most important origins of Western and Indian philosophies on the issue that definitely influenced the later thinkers of various schools of thought, so as to arrive at a fair synthesis of the same.

4.2. EARLY WESTERN PERSPECTIVES

Heraclitus: For Heraclitus, the fundamental thought is that the one universe is in a state of ceaseless change. 'One cannot step twice into the same river,' for other waters are ever flowing on. To signalize the notion of incessant activity Heraclitus chooses as his first principle the ever-living fire which is the vital principle in the organism and the essence of the soul. The fire of Heraclitus is not the abiding substratum of his predecessors, but that which is constantly being transformed into other things. The primal unity itself is in constant motion and change. Its creation is destruction and its destruction is creation. This view is opposed by Parmenides who interprets reality to be permanent without any change.

Parmenides: Parmenides, the metaphysician of the Eleatic school, challenges Heraclitus' teaching that everything changes— that fire becomes water, and water earth, and earth fire—that things first are and then are not. How can a thing both be and not be? How can anyone think such a contradiction? To say that it can, is to say that something is and something is not. Or, if Being has *become*, it must either have come from non-Being or from Being. If from non-Being, it has come from nothing, which is impossible; if from Being, then it has come from itself and is identical with itself, and thus has always been. Then, it is evident that from Being only being can come, that whatever is always has been and always will be, that everything remains what it is. Hence, there can be only one eternal, unchangeable Being.

Plato (428-348): The idea or form comprehends or holds together the essential qualities common to many particulars. The essence of things consists in their universal forms. The ideas or forms are not mere thoughts in the minds of humans or even in the mind of God (the divine thought is itself directed toward them). Plato conceives them as existing in and for themselves, possessing substantiality— i.e., they are substances— real or substantial forms, the original, eternal transcendent archetypes of things, existing prior to things and apart from them, and thus uninfluenced by the changes to which they are subject. The particular objects of perception are imperfect copies or reflections of the eternal patterns. Particulars may come and go, but the idea or form goes on forever. Humans may come and go, but the human-type is eternal. There are many particular objects or copies, but there is only one idea of class of things. The variety and diversity of independent forms or ideas is endless.

Aristotle (384-322): For him, metaphysics is the First Philosophy that deals with the Unmoved Mover. The Unmoved Mover is the first being or first substance. As the Unmoved Mover is the first, the philosophy which deals with this kind of being is the First Philosophy. Since God is the first being who is studied in the first philosophy, it is also called theology. In other words, according to Aristotle, metaphysics is the first philosophy and the science of being as being. It is the science of substance, especially of the first substance, of the First Cause, which is immovable, eternal, independent, and without matter, i.e., God. Thus, first philosophy or ontology is at the same time theology. The object of metaphysics is all beings – visible and invisible. It investigates all beings in so far as they are beings – the totality of beings and all particular domains of beings.

4.3. EARLY INDIAN PERSPECTIVES

In India, the problem of one and many is expressed through a rich variety of thoughts and practices that have developed over more than three thousand years. There is no single Indian view on the problem, but rather a plurality of ways of understanding and interpreting reality as reflected in the *Vedas*, and particularly in the classical systems of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism. The problem becomes thematic at various levels and in different contexts, in debates concerning the status of certain concepts as the soul, God, substances, universals, time, change, permanence/impermanence, etc.

When worship was accorded to any of the Vedic deities, the worshippers tended to make that deity the supreme one, having all the attributes of a monotheistic deity, of whom all others were forms or manifestations. This is known as henotheism, distinct from monotheism. Of course, these synthesizing processes, classification of gods, simplification of divine attributes and

powers are all evidences of the problem of one and many. The Vedic Indians were sufficiently logical to realize that the attributes of creation and ruling of the world could be granted only to one being, namely, *Prajapati*, the Lord of creatures, *Vsava-karman*, the world-maker. Thus, the logic of religious faith asserted itself in favour of religious monotheism and metaphysical monism. The monistic emphasis led the Vedic thinkers to look upon the Vedic deities as different names of the One universal Godhead. The real that lies behind the tide of temporal change is One, spoken of in different ways. The One pervades all things just as air or ether (*akasa*) pervades the universe. The One animates the world just as the life-breath (*prana*) animates the human body.

The Vedic seers did not stop with a mythological view of Reality. They did not rest content until they had a vision of the unlimited Being (*Tadekam*). The hymn where the unlimited Being appears is the *Nasadiya-sukta* which has been praised as containing 'the flower of Indian thought.' This hymn is the quintessence of Indian metaphysics. All things are traced to one principle. Opposites like being and non-being, life and death, and night and day, are shown to be the self-unfolding of that 'One.'

Though the Upanisads do not work out a logically coherent system of the problem of one and many, they give us a few fundamental doctrines which are truly metaphysical: *atman* and *Brahman*. The term *atman* was used in the *Rgveda* to denote the unborn part or the immaterial soul of human. *Atman* is the essence or ultimate reality of anything. The *atman* is the changeless principle behind the changing factors in human. This changeless aspect of human can be discovered only after a process of introspection which helps us transcend phenomenal aspects to reach the inner reality of *atman*. The word '*Brahman*' is derived from the root '*Brh*' which means to grow, to evolve. In the beginning it meant sacrifice, then prayer, and then it acquired its present meaning of ultimate reality. It is the ultimate cause of the universe which spontaneously bursts forth as nature and soul. Thus, *Brahman* transcends all, and yet underlies all as their background. The lower is transformed to the higher. *Brahman* is the immanent inner controller of all (*antaryamin*) and the self of all (*sarva-bhutantaratma*). As all spokes are contained in the axle and the wheel, so all beings are contained in *Brahman*. In the early *Upanisads*, *Brahman* stands for the superpersonal ground of the cosmos (objective) and *atman* is the principle of individual consciousness (subjective). But further thinking about the Unity of the Ultimate Reality, the One without a second, compelled the Upanisadic seers to resume that there cannot be a distinction between the essence or inner reality of the cosmos—the *Brahman*—and the inner reality of human—the *atman*—because *Brahman* cannot be taken into parts, and because the Absolute Consciousness cannot be thought of as being in any way other than the consciousness seen in the individual humans.

4.4. BEING AS ONE IN MANY

The problem of one and many is fundamental to human experience. Both poles seem to be equiprimordial to any intelligent awareness. 'The many' is inescapable for any experience which is spatio-temporal in its form, consisting in the manifold sensations that are spread out in space and that succeed one another in time. But to a human experience there also belongs (from the beginning) a unity, which allows the manifold items in it to be ordered and related among themselves; if this did not happen, there would be only a chaotic flux of impressions comparable to the flux which briefly passes through consciousness when we are overcome by dizziness or

are about to lose consciousness. Is this unity of experience imposed entirely by the human mind giving an illusion of unity? That might be the Kantian epistemology in which it is the human mind which imposes unity upon the given forms of space and time by unifying the spatio-temporal data brought together under the categories of the Understanding in the unity of apperception. However, it would be impossible for the mind to impose a unity on the manifold sensations unless the conditions for such a unity were already there in the sensations themselves. If the flux of sensations were endlessly varied, we could never emerge from the state of dizziness, leaving us helpless to construct any kind of unity. But in fact, the same sensations keep coming back, and we are able to recognize them. It is the repetition, the recurrence of what has been, that makes possible the construction of a unified experience; this repetition lies in the given, the raw data of experience. Unity then is not a creation of the human mind, but a discovery of what has already been there, a discovery which is never complete.

There has also been in many individuals and schools of thought, a metaphysical awareness of this discovery of the underlying unity of all things. Such persons and schools have been seized of an awareness of a single Reality embracing all the manifestations of the manifold in itself and expressing itself in them. The metaphysical vision of an all-embracing unity has found expression in various monistic philosophies. The most illustrious representative philosopher of monism in ancient Greece was Parmenides. For him, reality is one and unchanging. That which changes is that which is not, and thus, unreality. The thought of Parmenides may be compared with that of Sankara. For him too, there is one unchanging reality, Brahman.

But from the earliest times there have been also philosophers who are openly pluralist. In ancient Greece, the priority of the multiple and the changing over the one has usually been ascribed to Heraclitus. But the typical pluralist philosophy has also been empiricist, in contrast to the rationalistic approach of monism, evident in modern and contemporary times reaching its most extreme form in Nietzsche and the postmodernists who championed pluralism and contingency. For them, there is no beginning, no end, and no absolute centre, but just the endless proliferation of contingent occasions. This view lies at the opposite extreme of Parmenides, Sankara, and the like.

Perhaps it is difficult to find anywhere, a thoroughgoing monism or pluralism. Most advocates of monism have thought of the One implying at least some sort of differentiation in itself. They are in tacit agreement with Radhakrishnan's view that the One is so far from being empty that it is characterized by fullness and that it surpasses comprehension. At the other extreme, is it possible to find a thoroughgoing pluralism? Here even Nietzsche, who denied that there is either beginning, or end, or middle, nonetheless taught a doctrine of eternal recurrence. Thus, we have to conclude that the extreme forms, both of monism and of pluralism, are untenable. In the words of John Macquarrie, "The highest unity is that which already conceals within itself the richest diversity, while sheer diversity devoid of anything unifying is unthinkable. The one and the many do not stand in stark opposition to each other, for each implies the other." But how do they imply each other? The question of their mutual implication calls for further ontological analysis. The philosophical positions of monism, dualism, and of radical pluralism - all depend upon the ontological solution offered to the problem of one and many. But how can Being be *identical and diverse* at the same time?

In reality, monism, dualism, and pluralism, are extreme positions that create the illusion of solutions to *the problem of one and many*, which can be briefly explained in this way: Every being belongs to Being. Being reveals itself as an absolute everywhere. Every finite being is a whole being, a complete being; yet, it is not the whole of Being. For it does not contain all reality, since there are beings outside of it. A particular being participates in Being. The particular being that participates in Being is a complete being, a subsistent whole, unlike a part which is not a complete whole. The particular being, which is limited, is an imperfect being. It does not contain other particular beings, nor does it possess their perfection. Hence, it does not contain all perfection. Consequently, it is imperfect. It does not mean that it is unfinished in itself. The perfection of every particular being belongs itself wholly to Being, and by that token it is to be distinguished from every other being. In this way, Being possesses an absolute character. It is not opposed to anything. Consequently, it penetrates and envelops everything. Nevertheless, Being manifests some relativity, since the real is broken up into multiple unities which participate in Being. In other words, the participation of beings in Being is an undeniable fact. But how can we explain the fact that the distinct beings in Being preserve their autonomy? This is the fundamental metaphysical problem of one and many that calls for fresh attempts aiming at a solution. Being as one-in-many can be the result of such an attempt: *Being is one*: being is that which is in some way. Insofar as it is in some way, it is one. *Being is many*: being is that which is in some way. Insofar as being is in some way, each being is in its own way. Insofar as each being is in its own way, all beings are in their own ways. When all beings are in their own ways, there would be a plurality of beings that are many. In this sense, being is many. *Being is one-in-many*: being is that which is in some way. Insofar as being is in some way, it is one. However, each being is in its own way. Insofar as each being is in its own way, all beings are in their own ways, which are many. In other words, being which is in some way is also in its own way. Being is in beings, i.e., one is in many. Therefore, being is one-in-many.

4.5. FINITE BEING AS ONE IN MANY

Action as One in Many: For Blondel, action is a complex term of one in many that stands for the entire human experience conceived within the framework of human's basic needs and tendencies. It is the activity of the whole human, the synthesis of thought, will, and being itself. The greater and the nobler is human's activity, the greater and the nobler is one's action. Action is the most universal and unavoidable fact in human life. It is also a personal obligation that may demand a hard choice, a sacrifice, and even death (even suicide itself is an act). In other words, *to refuse to choose is to make a choice*. One always wills something; for otherwise one's act of willing would be a purely negative one. Now the minimum object we can assign to the will, after it has been proved that it is impossible for the will not to will, is to will nothing or nothingness (*le néant*). But is it possible to will nothing or to make nothingness, i.e., non-being, the term of our act of willing? Evidently not, because a negation is only conceivable in terms of an affirmation. Every negation implies an affirmation of something. Thus the *human will always tends towards something or Being* which underlies, penetrates, transforms, and unifies every action composed of two elements: exercise and determination. *Exercise* is the inner element of the operation which accounts for its taking place. *Determination* is the inner element of the operation which specifies or distinguishes the operation from other operations. Here, action

consists of exercise and determination; action is in the elements of the action. The One action is in its many elements. Thus, the One action is in many actions.

We know well that a finite being is as structured as one's operation is. "As the operation is, so the being is". The operation is composed of exercise and determination – a one in many. Hence a finite being (person) must also be composed – a one in many. The finite being is composed of Being (*esse*) and essence (*essentia*). Essence is composed of substance and accidents. Substance is composed of prime matter and substantial form. The prime matter is in potency; whereas the substantial form is in act.

Being in Essence: The finite being has to be identical with Being; for Being is immanent in this finite being because this being *is*. This identity is not perfect because alongside *this* being, there are also other finite beings. Being, insofar as it is immanent in this being through a certain identity, is not unlimited Being. For, unlimited Being transcends *this* particular Being. The immanent Being is a modified, finite, or limited Being. It is the *proper* Being of the particular being. The limiting principle (essence) is neither Being nor being. Nevertheless, the limiting principle constitutes *this* being as *this being*, and expresses a modification of the unlimited Being into a limited *being this* and nothing else. Whatever essence it has, it derives from the relative opposition to Being, to which as a modifying principle it refers by its whole nature, and from which it also has its modifying capacity. Hence, Being lets itself be modified or limited, and according to the limitation the finite being participates in unlimited Being. The unlimited Being, which transcends all modes, does not fully coincide with the *proper Being* of each being, which is only in a limited way. The finite being is through *participation* in unlimited Being. To explain this participation, we must admit that within the finite being there is a distinction between its *proper Being* and the principle through which Being becomes its own limited Being, i.e., its own modifying and limiting essence.

The relativity of essence and Being cannot be fully reciprocal. Being as being transcends all modes of being and therefore all modifications through essence, while the essence is fully relative to Being. However, in the finite being, Being has let itself be modified. In a sense, the essence is prior to being insofar as the mode modifies Being into *being this*. But this priority is not absolute; for the mode also arises from Being which includes in itself the possibility of being-finite, becoming 'incarnate' in the finite. Hence, Being is prior to essence; for Being makes the mode a mode of Being. Perhaps, the unlimited Being points to a ground which is transcendent not only relatively to finite beings but absolutely. This One, Absolute Ground of beings is in essence. The One is in many.

Being as the Principle of 'Unlimitation' of Beings: Should something possess no Being, but only an essence, then it is a mere possible and not real. The real differs from the possible because of Being. In other words, Being is that in a being which makes it real, distinguishing it from a merely possible being. It is the principle of perfection or unlimitation of all beings. Being is the inner principle or universal ground of that which really is and through which beings are in themselves.

Essence as the Principle of Limitation: When we ask about something— what it is, we suppose that we know already that it is a certain *what*. In this way it differs from the whatness of all other beings. If it differs in this way from that which it is not, then beings possess Being not to its

fullest extent, but only within determined limits that through which a being is that which it is. Essence is that through which a being is posited in a determined, limited manner of being. Of course, essence implies a negation of Being. It is not a negation which suppresses the Being of a being and reduces it to nothing; but it is a negation which limits its Being and reduces it to a finite being. It is not total or absolute but a partial and relative negation which refers to certain determinations and denies their presence in this Being. Such a relative negation is also a negative relation as it refers one being to all others and distinguishes it from them. A relative negation is a determined negation, determined by that which it refers. Hence the finiteness is always and necessarily determined finiteness, determined by Being which is present in every finite being.

Substance in Accidents: Finite beings are composed of a relatively permanent principle, which remains primarily the same throughout secondary changes and secondary principles. These principles may come and go without producing a change in the primary mode of being. The relatively permanent principle is called 'substance' and secondary principles are called 'accidents'. The notions of 'substance' and 'accident' may be acquired from the analysis of an external experience. For instance, our external senses reveal to us an unripe orange as a concrete whole which is extended in space, green coloured, sour, etc. The intellect conceives the qualities which may come and go as determinations which affect something underneath these changes and is modified by them. The difference between the determinations and their subject is expressed by the notions 'accidents' and 'substance' which correspond to a reality existing in the extramental world. Thus we may interpret substance as the being-in-itself of a finite essence which is the basic inner principle of permanence or continuity of that being which becomes. A being is originally constituted by its act of existing and essence. It is posited as a limited but a real being which exists in itself autonomously as a substance. It is Being-in-itself and not in another. *Accident*, on the other hand, is that which is not in itself but in another. It is a mode of being, but not autonomous. It does not exist in itself, but in another. It is whatever is added in anyway to another determined in its being. There is no accident which is not permeated and penetrated by substance, which sustains and supports them. The *one* substance is there *in many* accidents.

Form in Matter: All material beings possess a principle of materiality. It is not a being at all but a principle of material beings as such. Hence it cannot be known scientifically (empirically) but metaphysically. This principle of materiality is prime matter. It is the common substantial principle found in all material bodies. It is wholly without determinateness in itself. It cannot exist itself. It is substantial, but an incomplete substantial principle. It requires another substantial principle to exist, or rather to give it existence in a determinate body. The other substantial principle (with the exception of the human soul) is also an incomplete substantial principle. The prime matter is the determinable element and the substantial form is the determining element. It is also pure potentiality as it is a pure capacity for existence in a material body. It is a capacity which must be filled up, determined, and made into the only existible body by a substantial principle other than itself. Since the result of the union of this determining principle with prime matter is a single bodily substance, the union itself must be a substantial union, the substantial fusing of two substantial principles into an actuality which is a third thing. This third thing is neither prime matter alone nor substantial form alone, but an existing body of a specific kind. It is that which makes any body a body, not actively but passively receiving the impress and union of the substantial form. For the whole character of prime matter is its passivity, its inertness, its indifference to become this particular kind of body rather than another, in a word, its indeterminateness, its *potentiality*. In this way we can affirm the

classical Aristotelian assertion: 'Prime matter is that constitutive principle of corporal substance which of itself is quite indeterminate and hence can be determined to form corporeal substance.'

To illustrate the various senses in which the term *form* is used we shall consider a few instances of its use: Form is frequently used as a synonym for outline or shape. We speak of the oval form of a race-course, of the symmetrical form of a drawing. It also means a plan or program, a record, or a form-sheet to be filled. It is often used for *good condition*, and a golfer is said to be 'in form' or 'at the top of his form'. The adjective of form (i.e., formal) is often employed to indicate a certain dignity, or a certain decorum invoking precise details of dress or conduct. Thus we speak of a 'formal dress', 'formal occasion', 'formal introduction', etc. To a philosopher, form may mean that which *determines* a thing, sets it in its being, in its essence, in its substance, in its accidents, in its actuality. Any determining element is a being in form. When it is spoken of as corporeal substance the term refers to *substantial form* which makes a bodily substance an existing reality (actuality). It is the substantial form of human which makes the one bodily being a human being. That which sets and determines a substance in its actual being, and makes it a substance of this precise kind or essential nature, is its substantial form. Matter is there in every finite material substantial form. Matter is in form. One material principle (prime matter) is there in every material substantial form. One is in many.

Act in Potency: The term 'Act' comes from the Latin root '*Actus*' which means an entity of whatever kind, which perfects and determines a thing in its being or perfection itself. It includes the power or faculty, operations of the faculty, accidents, essence, substance, form, and act of existing. Whatever a being *has* or *is* in a positive manner is an act. It is perfection itself. There are as many kinds of acts as there are kinds of 'being'; for every being as such is a perfection. Potency comes from the Latin root '*potentia*' which means power. Potency is the capacity for act. It is the capacity or aptitude in reference to something which a being is not or has not, but which it can be or can receive. For example, hydrogen has the 'act' of hydrogen, and oxygen has the 'act' of oxygen; but both have the 'potency' of water. They are actually hydrogen and oxygen but 'potentially' water. Water on the other hand, is actually water; but it is potentially hydrogen and oxygen, since the water has the aptitude to be resolved into them. There are two main kinds of potency: Active Potency and Passive Potency. *Active potency* is the capacity to communicate act or perfection to another. It is a power of action such as the power of hearing. Since such a power in itself already confers certain perfection upon its subject, it is an act with respect to its subject. Hence it may also be called first act. *Passive potency* is the capacity to receive act or perfection from another, e.g., a child has the capacity for acquiring knowledge from parents and teachers. There are two kinds of Passive potency: Determinate Passive Potency and Indeterminate Passive Potency. *Determinate passive potency* is that which contains an act and is in potency to some further act, e.g., substance for accidents or the complete essence for the act of existing. *Indeterminate passive potency* is the principle of an act, but which itself contains no act. It is pure potency, e.g., prime matter. Act is there in every material finite being which is in potency. The One act is there in several potencies that a material finite being possesses.

We have already seen action and finite being as one in many. If finite being is one in many, unlimited Being – from which the finite being proceeds and in which every finite being is – should also be one in many.

Check Your Progress

Note: use the space provided for your Answers

1) What are the early perspectives on the problem of one and many (Indian and Western)?

2) Establish that Being is one in many.

4.6. LET US SUM UP

In reality monism, dualism, and pluralism, are extreme positions that create the illusion of solutions to *the problem of one and many* which can be briefly explained in this way: Every being belongs to Being. Everywhere Being reveals itself as an absolute. Every finite being is a whole being, a complete being; yet it is not the whole of Being. For it does not contain all reality, since there are beings outside of it. A particular being participates in Being. The particular being that participates in Being is a complete being, a subsistent whole unlike a part which is not a complete whole. The particular being, which is limited, is an imperfect being. It does not contain other particular beings; nor does it possess their perfection. Hence it does not contain all perfection. Consequently, it is imperfect. It does not mean that it is unfinished in itself. The perfection of every particular being belongs itself wholly to Being, and by that token it is to be distinguished from every other being. In this way Being possesses an absolute character. It is not opposed to anything. Consequently, it penetrates and envelops everything. Nevertheless, Being manifests some relativity, since the real is broken up into multiple unities which participate in Being. In other words, the participation of beings in Being or the presence of Being (One) in beings (many) is an undeniable fact.

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